



Burnley & District Historical Society.

THE NEWSLETTER.

Spring, 2023.

Editorial.

The Society has managed to get through its first post-Covid season remarkably well. Our talks have been well attended (better than we anticipated) and we have even had our first, though small scale and very local, visit. In addition, those of you who have an internet connection will be pleased to hear that the Society will be soon back on line, with a new site which is being developed gradually.

A small group of the Committee is working on the Lecture Programme for the coming year. The dates are included in this Newsletter, though that actual talks will have to be filled in at a later date.

I am not sure whether I should add this but there are several things happening in the Local History world, if that is not a misnomer, which, at first sight, seem to be pretty promising. At the present time, I can't tell you what they are but we should not have all that long to wait and, when appropriate, the Society will make its views known.

Roger Barstow Frost, MBE., MA., FRSA. (Editor).

Society Publications.

The Re-publication of one of Walter Bennett's booklets.

The Committee of the Society has decided to republish Walter Bennett's, "Burnley and the Grammar School in the Sixteenth Century". Roger Frost has undertaken to edit the booklet which was published in 1930, price 6d (by post 7d)! Unfortunately, there will have to be a price increase. Roger has started on his task and hopes to have it ready later in the present year.

The booklet originally had 32 pages with another page stuck into the back inside cover. It is hoped to get all the contents will be within the book and that explanatory footnotes will be added where necessary.

Ken's Corner.

The Burnley & District Historical Society is publishing a booklet which is to be called "Ken's Corner". This was a feature that appeared in the Newsletter until quite recently. The booklet is to be written by Stephen Child, our Hon. Secretary.

Society News.

The Patron.

Since the recent death of Sir Simon Towneley, KCVO., the Committee has decided to keep the honorary position of Patron open for a short period. The Worshipful Mayor of Burnley, the President of the Society, is Sir Simon's daughter, Cllr. Miss Cosima Towneley. In May her term of office comes to an end and Cllr. Arif Khan will become Mayor. The Mayor Making will be held at Burnley Mechanics' on Tuesday 23rd May, 2023.

The Website.

The Burnley & District Historical Society Website lapsed some time ago. One of our Committee members, Edward Walton, who is also Chairman of the Burnley Civic Trust, has undertaken some work on what might meet our requirements with regard to a new website. It has been resolved that our new site will be <https://burnleyhistoricalsociety.org/> There is a lot still to do and the site is being developed. Those of you who have computers might like to have look at what has been achieved so far.

The Society now has a new email address: ***banddhistsoc@gmail.com***

Attendances at Burnley & District Historical Society Meetings.

The Society has just concluded its first post covid season of lectures and we are pleased to report that they have been very well attended. They now take place in the afternoon, on the second Wednesday of the month, at 2pm., St John's Church Hall, Ivy Street, off Colne Road, Burnley. Of course, not all second Wednesdays are involved as the Season runs from the Autumn to the early Spring. The next Lecture Programme will be issued to members in the Summer.

The Society has been very fortunate in that the *Burnley Express* has decided to publish accounts of our lectures and give details of future lectures and events organised by the Society. These details are also included on the *Burnley Express* Facebook page. We hope that the *Express* will continue to do this as it has been much appreciated and has been very helpful. The Society also has a Facebook page showing details.

New Editor for “Retrospect”.

The Chairman of the Society, Mrs Denise North, is to replace Brian Hall as editor of the Society journal, Retrospect. Brian, who has been ill recently but who is, fortunately, recovering has been editor for some years. He took over from the founding editor, Roger Frost, a long time ago. Though Denise has four articles already lined up for the next edition, a request has gone out for additional articles. If you have one, you should contact Denise.

The 2022-3 Edition of Retrospect.

This is now available to members and can be collected at the Wednesday afternoon lectures or by contacting the Society’s Hon. Secretary, Mr Stephen Child, BA., ALA., on 01254 491295.

Brian Hall.

After serving the Burnley and District Historical Society for many years as Hon. Treasurer and Hon Editor, Brian has retired from these positions and has accepted an offer of a Vice Presidency. Brian remains a member of the Committee. We should all be very grateful for what Brian has done for the Society over the years. He has also been Chairman of the Friends of the Weavers’ Triangle almost since its inception, succeeding David Wild in that role.

Pamela Pickles.

Pamela has also retired as the Society’s Lectures Secretary. We would like to thank her for all the work that she has undertaken. A Lectures Secretary job is a difficult one as it is often the case that they use up their list of contacts quite quickly. In Pamela’s case this does not appear to have happened. In the interim Denise, Tony and Stephen will arrange the Speakers for the 2023 – 2024 Season.

Local History News.

Inflation hot spots across the UK.

Earlier this year UK inflation grew to a 40-year high of 11.1%. Since then, it has continued to increase, with food accounting for, perhaps, the highest percentages. However, the impact of inflation has not been felt equally across the United Kingdom.

A report has been published which shows that Burnley, with inflation at 13%, has the highest inflation rate in the country. Other towns and cities that are included at the top end of the figures, are Blackpool, 12.6%; Bradford (Yorkshire), 12.5% and Blackburn, 12.4%. None of the worst affected towns are in the south of England, though Leicester and Stoke-upon-Trent, in the Midlands, are both included at 12.2% and 12.1% respectively.

The figures have been arrived at by comparing how local wages have kept up to the price of energy, food and housing costs in any one area. So, Burnley is not only top of the Championship, in Football, we are top of the Inflation League! Not, perhaps, the subject for much celebration!

The Buttercross.

The Buttercross, otherwise known as the Habergham Eaves Cross, has been located to the rear of the former Bull and Butcher, in Cross Field, in Habergham, probably since the Middle Ages. Until recently only the base could be seen, but the Parish Council has decided that a new cross should be erected. Shown here is a picture of the new cross and the contractors, monumental mason and volunteer Ivor Emo on May 15th when it was erected.



The base of the old cross is Listed Grade 2 and it probably

marked the site of a type of market selling butter, milk, cheese and eggs, and other local produce. Many early markets were set away from towns and villages. They were situated at locations which were used by travellers and at places where people from some area around knew there would be a market. Often fields in areas such as these were known as “ceping” fields, that word being an ancient one for a market. From the word “ceping” we get “cheap” which developed into “cheapside”, or the land near a market. Part of St James’s Street, in Burnley, was once known as Cheapside and there is still an area of Padiham Road which is locally known as Cheapside.

Finsley Gate Forge.

A Community Trust has been set up to run the Finsley Gate Forge in Burnley. The site has long-standing historical connections, is an educational hub, a community centre, a visitor attraction and an exhibition space. At The Forge, a chess club, an art club, and a crochet club are run, together with a jobs club. Fitness sessions are also to be introduced.



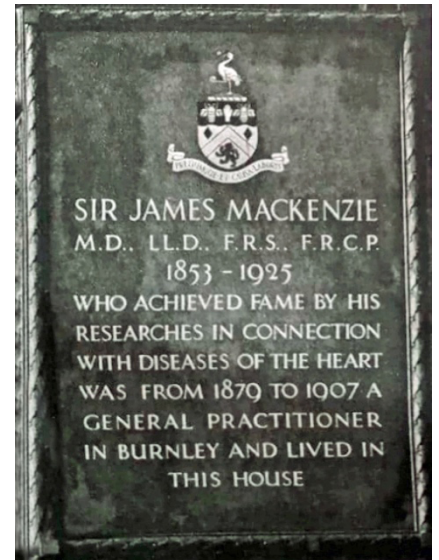
There will be guest speakers from the Weavers’ Triangle and, possibly, the Burnley & District Historical Society, but these have yet to be arranged. The forge is open to the public and demonstrations by a blacksmith are being arranged.

At the same site, which dates back to 1784 though the canal buildings were only completed in c1800, the newly opened public house and bar appears to be doing very well and is getting well known as a music venue.

The Mackenzie Memorial.

As many of you will know, Burnley has had two memorials to Sir James Mackenzie, a Burnley doctor who became famous for the developments he made in the treatment of heart disease. Unfortunately, one of the memorials has disappeared. The one in Thompson Park remains, in the Rose Garden, and has recently been restored as part of the Lottery Funded scheme for the Park. However, the one attached to his former house on Bank Parade, has been removed by the people, (a medical charity) who have been developing the property.

Burnley Civic Trust has asked Burnley Council if it will contact the developers and the builders but officers have had no response. The Trust has written again and pointed out that the memorial should be restored and have indicated that if this is not done voluntarily, the Council should bill either the builders or the developers to pay for a new memorial. We await Burnley Council's response, but the Trust will not let this drop.



The Pope bets on Kettledrum.

Edward Walton, the Chairman of Burnley Civic Trust, has unearthed a small extract from an old newspaper, *The North British Agriculturalist*, which is of considerable local interest. Here we give the extract in full:- "It is positively asserted the Pope has won £5,000 by Kettledrum. When Col Towneley was dining with Pope Pius IX, he said it was a playful humour, "Pray back your wonderful horse for £10 for me, my dear Colonel". His Holiness only meant it as a lively sally; but the gallant Colonel took his request in earnest and it is said that £5,000 is now en route to Rome". It appears that the item was originally published in *The Field*. The Colonel Towneley in question was Col. Charles Towneley.



THE WORSTHORNE STREET LAMP...from Ramon Collinge



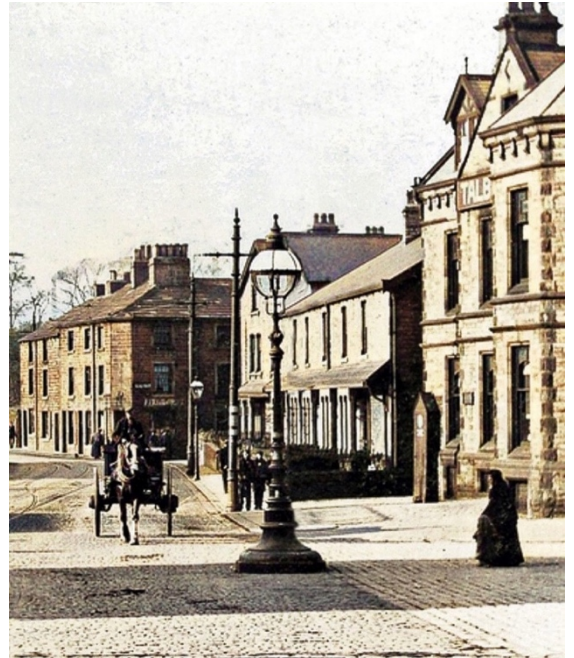
Most of our members will recognise the photograph shown here. It is, of course, Worsthorne Village Square with the gas lamp – Worsthorne's Gaumless – standing in front of St. John the Evangelist parish church. But the lamp has not always stood here.

Originally it stood at the bottom of Godley Lane, or what is now called Ormerod Road.

In 1924, Church Street needed to be widened and the lamp was in the way and so plans were made to move it. A public meeting was held to try to stop the move but to no avail.

On 3rd November 1924, *The Burnley Express* reported that the street lamp had been removed from the centre of Ormerod Road and placed in the square in Worsthorne; it had been replaced by two smaller lamps, one on each side of Ormerod Road.

Most of us can still remember another street lamp, the Gormless, which stood in the middle of the street at the bottom of Manchester Road. It was not the original but very nice street furniture nonetheless. About 10 years ago, it was taken away by Lancashire County Council, or Burnley Borough Council to enable them to carry out extensive street alterations; I think they promised to bring it back afterwards but that promise was never kept. Perhaps some official can tell us where the lamp is at present and what plans there are to bring it back, perhaps in another part of the town centre



In two years the lamp will celebrate its century of standing in the square at Worsthorne. Perhaps the Parish Council could attach a small commemorative plaque to that effect.



Forthcoming Events.

Dates for Lectures, 2023 – 2024.

The dates for the forthcoming season of lectures are as follows: **2023**: September 13th; October 11th; November 8th; December 13th. **2024**: January 10th; February 14th; March 13th and April 10th.

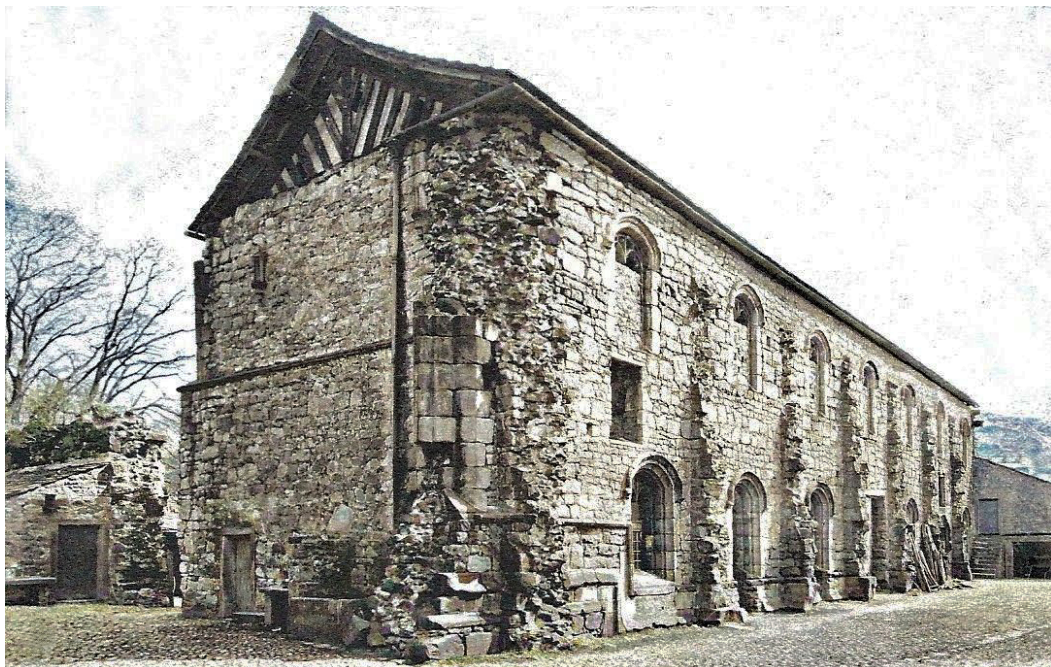
All meetings will be at St. John the Baptist Church Hall, Ivy Street, Burnley and will take place on Wednesday afternoons at 2pm. It is hoped that a full list of the lectures, with speakers etc., will be available for the next edition of the Newsletter and will be shown on the new website.

Visits.

The Society has already made its first visit since the ending of Covid. It was to the **Burnley Civic Trust's Heritage Image Collection** which is housed in the Old Police Station at the rear of the Town Hall. As the premises occupied by the Trust are small only a few members attended, but they were surprised by the amount of work that has already been undertaken. The scheme has been funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund and it is probably unique in the country.

The Burnley & District Historical Society will be organising a visit to **The Finsley Gate Canal Wharf** in Burnley. The visit, which may be arranged in partnership with the Burnley U3A group, will include a short walk by Roger Frost, one of our Vice Presidents. As yet no date has been agreed but we hope to have it in the next Newsletter.

It might be a little ambitious for the B&DHS to organise a visit outside the immediate area but other societies are managing to do this. The Burnley Civic Trust made a visit to the **Photography Museum**, in Bradford, only recently, and the Todmorden Antiquarian Society is planning a visit to **Whalley Abbey** in the near future.



The Lay Dormitory at Whalley Abbey

The latter came about after one of our Vice Presidents, Roger Frost, spoke to the Antiquarians. Whilst working at the High School, many years ago, he had organised several school trips to Whalley and the Castle at Clitheroe. It seems that the parents wish to catch up on their now grown-up children! Perhaps we, in Burnley ought to be looking at more distant visits?

The Weavers' Triangle.

The Society shares many interests with the Friends of the Weavers' Triangle so it is right that we publicise their events. The Visitor Centre, on Manchester Road, was opened by Cosima Towneley, the Mayor of Burnley, who is now the Trust's Patron, on Saturday 8th April. The hours will be from 2pm to 4pm on Saturdays and Sundays throughout the year. On most of these days refreshments at the Visitor Centre will be available. The centre will be open on special occasions, when appropriate. For details of these, see the local press and listen to Radio Lancashire.

The Visitor Centre has a new exhibition. It is of the work being carried out at the former Burnley Iron Works (now known as Newtown Mill) which is located within the Triangle. The building is being refurbished with Levelling-up Funding, from the Government, and the architects for the project, Dale Architectural, have installed a small exhibition the images in the Centre.

The former Iron Works, probably Burnley's most important industrial heritage building, is to be transformed into a state-of-the-art education facility for the University of Central Lancashire, which has plans to increase the number of students in Burnley.

The Oak Mount Engine House, which is owned by a Trust of the Weavers' Triangle, will be open on several occasions throughout the year. The remaining two are Sunday 27th August, and for Heritage Open Days, on Sunday 17th September. Access is FREE to everyone. Roger Frost will lead heritage walks to Oak Mount Mill, from the Visitor Centre at 2-15pm on both of these days.



The Toll House on Manchester Road
and below
Oakmount Mill Engine
in its working days



u3a in Burnley & District

u3a are seeking to expand their attendance and membership and offer those no longer working full time or busy raising a family the opportunity to be involved in various activities. The group meets every 4th Thursday of the month at Padiham Unitarian Church at 2.30pm. For further details search on <https://u3asites.org.uk/burnley/home> and on Facebook u3a Burnley & District